



Quiet Corner NEMBA
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March 2, 2022

Dear Co-Chairs Cohen and Gresko, Vice-Chairs Slap and Palm, Ranking Members Miner and Harding, and members of the Environment Committee,

On behalf of the Quiet Corner chapter of the New England Mountain Biking Association (QC NEMBA) located in Northeastern Connecticut, we write to ask you to support Raised House Bill 5291, An Act Authorizing Bonding for Bikeways, Greenways and Recreational Trails.

This important bill would increase the bond authorization for the Recreational Trails and Greenways Grants program to \$6 million. As you may be aware, in the Fall of 2021, DEEP issued a request for recreational trails proposals with only \$3 million available, and received 65 applications requesting over \$22 million. The \$3 million was granted to twenty worthy projects, but another \$7 million in highly ranked proposals were unable to be funded, and we expect the ongoing need for investments in Connecticut's outdoor recreation infrastructure to continue.

QC NEMBA did apply for a grant through the Recreational Trails and Greenways Grants program to build additional mountain bike and multi-purpose trails at the Pomfret Recreation Park, owned by the Town of Pomfret, but was not given an award.

The project will include 5+ miles of trails, and direct access to both the state's Air Line State Park Trail and another newly built trail system in Pomfret Forest. This trail system will be designed for both novice and advanced mountain bike riders, as we believe that helping to develop the novice riders is critical to the future of our chapter and the sport. The location is important because it has easy access from Central Mass and Rhode Island; this area will become a new riding destination, within an hour's drive from Norwich, Hartford, Providence, and Worcester. In addition to the prime location, we hope to use this project as an example of how partnering with local towns and cities is the future of our sport and multi-use trail making. We have full enthusiastic support of area residents and hikers, as they will be sharing the area with us.

Project Benefits

- By building this trail system on town land, we'll be able to use it as an example to other towns and grow our total riding destinations.
- This project will benefit novice riders because we will be able to build trails directly geared towards beginners and multi-use trail users. Most trails in our area are technical, old-school style trails that are more difficult for the novice rider to learn on.
- This project will benefit more experienced riders because it will be a new place to build new trails and most of all, a new place to ride! Often, illegal trails are built because riders have the desire to build. This project will give riders a chance to help build legal trails in their local area and hopefully cut down on illegal trail building.



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- The project will also benefit NEMBA by demonstrating partnership and setting an example of how to build a town/chapter relationship and work with other user groups.
- This project will benefit the Town of Pomfret by bringing in riders from around New England to eat, drink, and shop at the local businesses. It will provide trails and access on land previously inaccessible.
- The land in question is adjacent to the 50+ mile Airline Trail, and will be used by hikers, naturalists, cross country skiers, and mountain bikers.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this matter.

Sincerely,

Quiet Corner NEMBA Leadership Team

Jeff Doyle, President - Sterling
Serena Dupuis, Vice President - Killingly
Heather Merson, Treasurer - Killingly
Christian Smutnick, Secretary - Pomfret

NEMBA (New England Mountain Bike Association) is a recreational trails advocacy organization with 31 chapters throughout New England and over 7,000 members. Our mission is to promote the best that mountain biking has to offer, steward the trail systems where we recreate and preserve open space. We are an educational 501 (c) 3 non-profit. www.nemba.org